

TIME WIZARDS

OR, LOS MAGOS DEL TIEMPO



FIRST EDITION

KEY RULE

Every session starts with everybody shouting “¡mientras tanto, los MAGOS DEL TIEMPO!” This is a critical step and cannot be forgotten.

Example: *Everybody throws their hands in the air and shouts “¡mientras tanto, los MAGOS DEL TIEMPO!” while a sweet funky beat opens their session.*

DOCTRINES

Time Wizards uses player-imposed rules called **Doctrines**, or honor codes. Before the game is played or characters are created, each player submits a Doctrine in clockwise order until everyone agrees to finish. Doctrines can be social (“no Monty Python references this game!” or “No looking at your cell phone while at the table!”) or game-related (“You can’t make a half-pony half-orc half-elf catboy because that’s just wrong!”). Each proposed Doctrine can be challenged, and is then put before a vote. All Doctrines are subject to approval by the TM, as are all punishments for violating one.

CHARACTER CREATION

Each player comes into the game with a generic human character living a boring, mundane life. This character will be used as a template for the resulting Time Wizard.

To create a Time Wizard, the players must first confer with their Time Master. The Time Master (TM) spends time with each player, describing that player’s basic, mundane, boring life for a week’s time. **During this time, the player can take five phrases the TM says and turn these phrases into their Time Wizard powers.** The player has until the “week” is done to pick a stopping point (called the “Time Unit Declaration,” i.e. the point when the basic mundane character awakens to his latent Time Wizard abilities). Players

who do not pick a point will have to deal with what they were doing at midnight when the week ends, which will obviously result in a lot of Sleeping at Midnight on Sunday Morning Wizards!

The player’s new **Time Wizard Name** is a representation of that player’s Time Unit Declaration.

Example: *Morgan is acting TM for a group of players consisting of Matt, Noh, and Kromgol. Morgan spends with each player, describing that player’s boring life. Matt’s Time Unit Declaration gave him the Time Wizard name “**Saturday Morning just before 6 o’Clock,**” and Noh’s gave her “**Monday Evening around 10 o’Clock.**”*

*Kromgol is well into the third day, thanks to everyone just enjoying Morgan’s voice. His character just came home from work. On the way, he flipped off a dumb driver, accidentally beheaded his neighbor’s mailbox, fumbled his keys at the door, put away his coat and wallet, picked up and moved the cat (that was on the recliner), sat down with a bag of fast food, unwrapped his cheeseburger, and changed the channel on his television. He claims this as his Time Unit Declaration and accepts the Time Wizard name “**Wednesday Afternoon, Quarter-Past-4 o’Clock.**”*

It’s been too far from work to pick anything from there. Kromgol can pick from powers such as “behead the neighbor’s mailbox,” “fumble the keys,” “move the cat,” “unwrap the cheeseburger,” and “change the channel.”

Note: Time Wizard powers go as far as you want to take them. That is to say, with a power called “move the cat,” you could very well move the letters C, A, or T in someone’s name or levitate a tiger. With “unwrap the cheeseburger,” you could turn any cheeseburger into an eldritch grenade, causing them to “unwrap” their physical essence, exposing their cosmic innards.

BEGINNING THE GAME

The game now proceeds as normal. The TM provides the players with general information as to the setting (which can be literally anything), sets up a scenario, or whatever else needs to be done.

Example: Morgan's session begins with him describing how Wednesday Afternoon, Saturday Morning, and Monday Evening walk into a bar. They eat, drink, and discuss what they should do now. Everything is going fine until a mafia hitman squad attacks the bar. Nine guys with guns hold up the whole place while their leader grills the bartender.

TIME MOMENTS

Whenever a Time Wizard chooses to influence reality with his or her powers, that player declares a new unit in time by slapping the table and saying, "I WANT TO DECLARE A TIME MOMENT."

Players begin a Time Moment by refreshing their dice pools back to the full allotment: **5d4** and **5d12**. The TM selects a difficulty rating from 1-10, 1 being "very easy to affect" and 10 being "nearly impossible to affect." The more chaotic a situation, the easier it is to affect. Typical difficulties are 2, 4, and 6.

Difficulty	Difficulty Rating
Trivial	1
Easy	2
Medium	4
Hard	6
Nearly Impossible	10

Every player now decides what they will try to affect about the situation. These players write down their desired effect on a piece of paper and hand it to the Time Master. **There is absolutely no communication between players during moments of time. Time has stopped and communication is impossible, even for powerful Time Wizards.**

Play then proceeds into the **Slap Phase** (see **Slap Phase** below).

Example: Kromgol notices the situation at the bar has gotten a bit out of hand, and decides to declare a moment in time. Morgan feels the situation is rather chaotic; everyone is unpredictable, beer has been spilled. The challenge rating shall be 2.

Kromgol writes his desired effect on the situation, but he fails to hide his cheeky grin. This prompts both Matt and Noh (independently of one another) to try to do something as well. They both write down their desired effects and hand them to Morgan.

THE SLAP PHASE

The Slap Phase is the most important phase of the game. It is multi-layered, complex, and nuanced. A flowchart has been included on the last few pages to help elucidate the finer points. The basic rule to consider: **toss d4's to deter effects and d12's to encourage them.**

The slap phase proceeds as follows:

- 1) Each player chooses a number of dice from his or her dice pool equal to the challenge rating.
- 2) Starting from the left side of the TM, each player (one at a time, in clockwise order) throws his chosen dice towards a defined, somewhat central region on the table and shouts "**SLAP!**" All slappers must keep their hands beyond the boundaries of the table until "SLAP!" is declared.
- 3) The other players (including the TM) slap at the dice. Dice that were fully covered by the slapper's hand go to that player's pool. Of the dice that were not slapped, half goes to the original player's die pool, and the other half goes to the TM (the TM wins ties).
- 4) Repeat from Step 2 until everyone has thrown their dice.

Example: Starting from the left side of Morgan, we see the order to be Kromgol, Matt, and then Noh. Morgan rolls last.

Kromgol thinks the stuff that Matt and Noh are thinking of doing might be good, so he chooses 2d12 and throws them slightly towards Noh and Matt while simultaneously shouting "SLAP!" in the hopes that they'll catch his drift.

When Matt's turn comes he chooses 2d4 because he's an asshole. He winks at everyone and drops the dice dead center on the middle of the table. Noh and Morgan both go for them while Kromgol wisely does not trust Matt and decides to keep his hands away. Noh is faster and gets both dice, but her hand gets hammered by Morgan's palm and the dice dig really deep.

OUTCOMES

Once the tumultuous Slap Phase has completed, every participant rolls all dice in their resulting "roll pool." Each player tries to roll higher than the TM. Dice that are rolled are put aside for the rest of the Moment.

Optional, but fun: This phase can use two specialty decks of cards, the "YES" deck and the "NOPE" deck. If a player rolled higher than the TM, then that player draws a card from the YES deck; if he or she tied or did not roll higher than the TM, the TM draws a "NOPE" card. These cards modify the player's desired outcome; for example, a "Yes, and you achieve something more..." card allows the player to do a little more than he or she had originally declared. "YES" effects are chosen by the player; "NOPE" effects are chosen by the TM.

The player with the highest roll gets to describe his effect first, which then becomes immutable (read: unchangeable). Once he has done so, the second highest does the same, then the third highest, and so on until all players that participated in the Moment have

declared their effect. Effects "resolve" immediately upon declaration.

Example of the "YES" DECK: Following the slap phase, Kromgol is left with 3d12, 1 from Noh and 2 from Morgan. He rolls the highest number amongst all players, a good 27. He gets to describe his effect first. Because Morgan is using the "YES" and "NOPE" decks, Kromgol pulls from the "YES" deck. He receives "Yes, and you achieve something more..." and describes how Wednesday Afternoon uses his power "Move the cat" to move the 'a' in 'bar' away, and smash it back from the right, changing the place into a 'bra.' "What happens to all the people?" someone wisely asks. All of the players and the mafia hit squad are now squished between the soft fabric of the bra and some warm flesh, trapped in some sort of hammerspace. The cold guns are rather irritating against this new woman's bosom.

Matt rolled second highest, and goes next. He has to abide by the unchanging reality that they are all now trapped between bra and breasts. He uses his power "Make it tight" to tighten the bra, agitating the woman, who tries to adjust her undergarments. This results in the mafia hit men getting squished around, losing any grip to any and all guns once time starts moving forward again.

Example of the "NOPE" deck: Noh's character, formerly a pimp named Mortimer and now a Time Wizard named Monday Evening Around 10, is on a pirate ship. The watcher shouts "Land ahoy!" and wakes a hung-over Monday Evening. He wants to use his power "Slap a ho" to shut this bitch up. Unfortunately, Noh rolls very poorly. Morgan pulls a "NOPE, and something goes horribly wrong" card.

In his hung-over state, Monday Evening slaps the 'h' from 'ahoy' so hard that it flies over 'a' and lands on its head, getting crooked in the

process. This turns the watcher's perceived image from "Land ahoy!" as in "I see land!" to "Land yaoy." This sounds like "Land yaoi!" as in Africa and Australia getting their gay on. This causes all sorts of tectonic problems, because land is not meant to love land like a man loves a woman (or a man, in this case).

MOVING FORWARD

Once all of the outcomes of a Time Moment have been declared and resolved, the players can proceed with one of two options. The Time Wizards can either choose to step out of the Moment and allow time to resume at normal cadence. They also have the option to enter a state known as "Time Dilation."

If the players choose for time to move forwards, all of the effects take place and the game continues in real time. If the players want to affect some sort of situation again, a new moment in time should happen when appropriate or when one is declared by the time master.

Example: *Monday Evening, Wednesday Afternoon, and Saturday morning all jump out from in between the bra and bosom with their new friend, the bartender, and find themselves on the deck of a pirate ship with a bunch of people looking extremely focused on fighting a battle.*

"Welcome to the set of Pirates of the Caribbean!" Morgan proclaims.

TIME DILATION

Time Dilation occurs when one or more player elects to stay at the same moment in time. The moment goes back to a new challenge based on the chaos, with a difficulty modifier that is slightly higher (+2) than it was before. The game proceeds as normal, with players deciding what powers they want to use, performing the slap phase, and resolving the outcomes.

However, because the Moment has taken much longer to resolve than it normally would, the Time Wizards have some difficulty in affecting the world around them. **When players describe their effects to the other players, they must gargle soda while doing so.** Any effects on the state of play will be interpreted by the other players, based solely upon the noises they can hear.

Example:

*GRLGHRLAGALAAEGNKALLKGJAEÖDKGHRÖR
GLREaGEalfghAEGGLRKElGEAGLARFKANAeFL
GENaFLKGRLAEJLFNGLRAKFNGRALKGHGHLG
RKAHGJRALKGH*

"CHANGE" CARDS

Both the players and the TM have a single draw, per person per game, from the deck of "CHANGE" cards. "CHANGE" cards have any number of random effects, and can be used at any point during the game. Think Forrest Gump: *"You never know what you're going to get!"*

When a "CHANGE" card is drawn, it is immediately used and its effects take place.

When should I use my "CHANGE" card? If something extremely nonsensical has occurred and screwed up the reasonable game state, then perhaps the only way to rationalize it is to make even crazier things happen. Cards have the most impact when drawn in dramatic moments when nobody is sure where the game is or could be going.



PARADOXES

A Paradox can result in any number of ways. The most likely is when two effects must happen, but one makes the other impossible. In case of a paradox, the TM draws a "CHANGE" card at no cost. If this card can apply to help resolve the paradox before it occurs, then it immediately does so.

If the card cannot help the situation, then neither of the effects happens, all dice pools refresh to their maximums, and the moment passes immediately. The greater universe is so opposed to the effects that you will cause that it has removed them from space and time.



TIME TRAVEL

The Time Wizards can also engage in Time Travel, but it is extremely detrimental to their well-being. In order to use this ability, the Wizards must declare a new Moment in Time during which they will use their time traveling abilities. Any players wishing to sabotage this may do so just like in any other Moment.

Because of the strain placed on the Wizards' bodies by the time displacement, **all** Slap Phases that occur during Time Travel are performed with exclusively d4's (and not both d4's and d12's). The maximum pool of d4's for Time Travel periods is **10d4**.

To leave time travel and return to the present, a new moment must be declared. This is another opportunity to make mischief. Note: the rule of "only d4's" still applies in this circumstance!

ADDITIONAL TIDBITS

In its current form, Time Wizards runs on the participants' abilities to improvise.

Some helpful hints to go by:

- 1) Always say "yes" or "yes, but..." Don't shoot down ideas, but modify them if need be.
- 2) Listen. Notice. Nobody likes the guy who walks over the tomato on the floor and doesn't even notice that he has done so.
- 3) Most obvious, most dramatic, complete opposite, two things changed, etc. Think up different outcomes and go for the one that pleases your gut feeling the most.
- 4) Don't be afraid to speak. If nothing is spoken, nothing happens, and that's boring!

For inspiration to help with improvisational skills, look up "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" and "Thank God You're Here."

If you choose to continue, please note: Time Wizards is an evolving beast. There is much to test, and feedback is important. Nothing will make sense the first time you play it.

Time Wizards is best suited to looser playgroups that can roll with things and have fun without needing to defer to rulebooks for every niche case. It's meant to be nonsensical, and it should follow that any "plot" the TM may have in mind is soon to be ruined by the machinations of the players.

APPENDICES

The next few pages consist of a couple of flow charts that may help to explain the flow of the game. They are largely a hodgepodge of nonsense that was thrown together by the original idea for Time Wizards, and entirely up for debate. Most of them make very little sense upon inspection, and have been interpreted and included in this book already.

